



News Release

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Public inquiries: State COVID-19 Information Hotline, 1-800-525-0127

Delta variant drives sharp increase in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations

Officials urge vaccination immediately to combat the variant's spread

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is concerned about a rise in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations being seen across the state due to the spread of the delta variant. Over the past four days, an average of 1,500 new cases have been reported each day. Hospital occupancy is at the highest levels seen to date in 2021 due to increased COVID-19 transmission, patient demand, and hospital staffing challenges. Today's [data dashboard](#) update will reflect the following increases:

- Cases: 6,000 new cases will be reported today following a backlog from July 30.
- Testing: Percent positivity is climbing rapidly to 5.5%, up from a low of 2% a month ago.
- Hospitalizations: More than 600 people are hospitalized with COVID-19, an increase of more than 20% from last week.

The highly contagious delta variant, which is a more transmissible strain of the virus, is the dominant strain in Washington making up roughly 76% of sequenced cases. While no vaccines are 100% effective, it is proven COVID-19 vaccines provide strong protection against variants, prevent severe illness and hospitalization, and lower your risk of death. [More than 94% of all cases, deaths, and hospitalizations](#) in Washingtonians 12 years of age and older can be attributed to people who have not been fully vaccinated.

“Higher vaccination rates across the state are needed to protect our communities,” said Secretary of Health Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH. “If there was ever a time to get vaccinated, it is now in the race against this variant.”

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If you have questions, reach out to your healthcare provider or visit DOH's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page. To find vaccine locations near you, visit the state's [Vaccine Locator](#) website.

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